

JEFFERSON JOURNAL

July/August 2020

New Guinea The Wildest Island



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By Pepper Trail

I've been lucky enough to make three visits to New Guinea, all as a naturalist for small expedition cruise ships operated by Zegrahm Expeditions, an adventure travel company based in Seattle. In this time when even the most mundane travel is out of the question, I invite you on an armchair visit to three very different parts of this wildest of islands. Enjoy this getaway as ornithologist Pepper Trail takes us through the wilds of New Guinea.

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COVER: An elaborate welcome featured dancing and the breathtakingly magnificent colors of the village of Kopar, near the mouth of the Sepik River in New Guinea.
PHOTO: Pepper Trail

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Black Music

As calls for racial justice ring out across the country, a number of voices from the public radio community have emerged to provide perspective on the pain experienced by black people in America. One such voice is that of my colleague Bill Johnson, General Manager at NPR-member station WRTI in Philadelphia. Bill wrote a powerful personal essay following George Floyd's death that he graciously gave me permission to share with JPR listeners.

Why Black Music Matters Now More than Ever

By Bill Johnson

I hurt. As a Black man in America, I hurt. I don't need the highlight reel of victims, no matter their color. I don't need calls for peace that dismiss the rage inside. I don't need tone-deaf calls for dialogue with people who don't speak my language. I don't need other's stories of their cultural atrocities. I don't need to hear, "That was a long time ago." I don't need to hear move on. I don't need to hear we're all equal. I don't need to hear about wrongs being righted in Heaven. I don't need to hear, "But they DID break the law." I don't need to hear anyone. say. anything.

I need some Black Music.

And then I need the rest of America to listen to a LOT of Black Music.

Listen for the voices of my ancestors in the holds of ships crossing the Atlantic. Listen for the screams of pain from the whip across their backs. Listen for the fear of hooded men gathering under cover of night. Listen for my father's voice telling me how a diner wouldn't serve him as a young airman in basic training as he prepared to put his life on the line for this country. Listen for Brother Hannibal and Sister Rosa. Listen for the man who called me a Nigger out loud in a local bar. Listen for the racist who said to me, "I don't like Black people but you're not like them." Listen for the cries of people shot in the street for exercising rights promised on paper but denied in practice. Listen for the sound of feet crossing the street because you're coming their way. Listen for the sound of code-switching. Listen for the sound of a school without books or computers. Listen for the sound of the Church taking the pain away. Listen for the sound of being called an Oreo. Listen for the sound of my mother telling me to be careful in those streets to this very day. Listen for the sound of chain gangs digging ditches. Listen for the sound of families turned to dust on the auction block. Listen to Black America. It's all there. Just Listen.

If America wants to understand, truly understand, the anger and the pain and the frustration and fears of Black America then listen to Black Music.

— Bill Johnson

Black Music is the story of the Black Experience. From rhythms and melodies heard in the fields to the sounds of violence in the streets. It's all there. The stories have been told over and over and over and over. No conversation necessary. In fact no conversation POSSIBLE—until you hear the story.

Whether it's Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Ma Rainey, Mahalia Jackson, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Little Richard, John Coltrane, Curtis Mayfield, Hannibal, Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye, The Last Poets, The Roots, Robert Glasper, Kendrick Lamar, or thousands of other Black voices, there is no shortage of narrative about the Black Experience—a living narrative continually being written by Black artists hoarse from shouting so loud.

George Floyd's death and the country's response were utterly predictable. And that breaks my heart. It was simply a question of how many George Floyd's did there have to be before enough was enough? Black Music has posed this question incessantly for over a century. Black Music chronicles the Black Experience which in my mind, by definition, is the American Experience. A country built on the sweat and subjugation of Blacks is a country defined by the Black Experience—an American Experience.

For me, Black Music is an immediate reminder that I am not a victim but rather I'm part of a powerful legacy. A reminder that I cannot and will not fail my elders or ancestors who endured so much more than me. I am of a people who have withstood horror and evil in this country for 400 years. Yet we stand. Our backs are not broken and our hearts are strong. In fact, our story has changed the world through music—gospel, jazz, hip-hop, R&B, the blues, funk, soul—Black Music.

If America wants to understand, truly understand, the anger and the pain and the frustration and fears of Black America then listen to Black Music. Listen past the feelings of guilt over slavery. Listen past the horrors of lynchings. Listen past the rapes, killings, and torture. Listen until the Truth emerges; that despite it all, together, as equals, valuing love for each other over all else we can conquer all things. It's in there.



Paul Westhelle is
JPR's Executive Director.





NEW GUINEA

The Wildest Island

Article And Photos
By Pepper Trail

It is my deep hope that before too long it will once again be possible to travel the world. Paradoxically, travel off the beaten track may lead us back to an unremembered home. What is most strange often strikes a resonant chord deep within ourselves. Nowhere on earth have I experienced this shock of recognition more strongly than New Guinea—the wildest of islands.

New Guinea. The words may conjure up images of cannibals and crocodiles, or of birds of paradise performing amazing and rather ridiculous displays (breathlessly narrated by David Attenborough), or of fierce-looking warriors adorned in the most beautiful and extravagant of feathers. Whatever image arises, it is sure to be wild.

New Guinea is the second-largest island in the world, and still one of the least known. Home to short-tempered flightless cassowary birds, kangaroos that climb in trees, and those incredible birds of paradise, it is also a hotspot of human diversity, with over 850 distinct languages and an extraordinarily rich variety of cultural traditions. Protected by dense swamps and jungles, rugged mountains, and famously warlike inhabitants, it was one of the last places on earth explored by Westerners, despite a very long history of human settlement.

I've been lucky enough to make three visits to New Guinea, all as a naturalist for small expedition cruise ships operated by Zegrahm Expeditions, an adventure travel company based in Seattle. In this time when even the most mundane travel is out of the question, I invite you on an armchair visit to three very different parts of this wildest of islands.

PREVIOUS PAGE: Embellished with feathers, this Kopar woman plays a part in the welcoming ceremony that featured dancers in elaborate costumes.

TOP: Used in so many ways, feathers are a major component of the culture throughout New Guinea.



Sorry, but when Asmat warriors perform a traditional village “greeting,” complete with threats to demonstrate their intimidating strength, no amount of preparation beforehand will keep you from being intimidated.

The Sepik

The Sepik River is the longest in New Guinea, at over 700 miles, and flows north from the central highlands down into the broad coastal plain where, after many serpentine twists and turns, it finally empties into the Bismarck Sea. Unlike many other regions of New Guinea, the Sepik has so far been spared large-scale mining and logging operations, and the river flows through one of the most intact tropical watersheds in the world.

Near the mouth of the Sepik is the village of Kopar. I have visited Kopar on two occasions, several years apart, and the different circumstances of these visits provided complementary insights into life there. On the first visit, we arrived unannounced, the result of adapting our ship's schedule to an unexpected change elsewhere—a frequent necessity in New Guinea! Given their location just upriver from the coast, the residents of Kopar receive visits fairly often (that is, a few times a year...), and so our appearance was not a shock. Nevertheless, it allowed us to see the life of the village on a completely ordinary day, without special activities prepared for visitors. Seldom, if ever, have I experienced so strongly the sensation of stepping outside of time, into a rhythm unchanged for centuries.

The daily life of villages on the Sepik centers around the preparation of sago. The tidally and seasonally flooded forests do not allow the cultivation of root crops like taro or sweet potato, the staple foods of the highlands. Instead, the essential starch comes from the trunk of the sago palm. The trees are cut down when about 15-years old and 30-50 feet long, split open lengthwise, and then the starch-containing pith in the trunk is laboriously hacked out, producing a massive pile of chips. These are then pounded into a coarse powder, which is kneaded in water over a cloth or sieve to release the starch. The water with the starch passes into a trough (often an old dugout canoe) where the starch settles. After several washings, the starch is ready to be used in cooking. Imagine reducing a tree to very, very fine sawdust, and eating the results—which taste pretty much like sawdust.

According to Wikipedia, a single palm can yield 800 pounds of dry starch. I don't know about that, but I do know that the extraction process, done entirely by hand tools, is incredibly laborious. We wandered the village, as sago production went on in all its phases, as clams dug from the riverbanks were smoked over old barrels, as mats were woven, and as we gathered an ever-growing escort of kids curious about, well, everything.

The second visit was well-prepared for, and was a much more colorful affair. Preparations had been under way for weeks, and we received two elaborate welcomes—first by the village women, and then by the men—followed by the enactment of an important Sepik legend. The magnificent costumes, and



TOP: The laborious endeavor of processing sago ends up producing a starch that can then be cooked into a sort of pancake.

ABOVE: After the pith of the sago palm is hacked out, what results is a large pile of chips.

the pride of the dancers in their culture, were breathtaking, and it was hard to imagine that this was the same quiet, humble village of our earlier visit.

The almost otherworldly feeling of the day was completed by the presence of an allegedly tame, but every intimidating cassowary in the village. These large and famously aggressive flightless birds possess a dagger-like claw on their big toe which is quite capable of disemboweling a man, and the sight of "Kris" snapping sago-coated raw fish out of the hands of the villagers did not set my mind at ease. But in the end, we all returned to our ship un-disemboweled, and deeply impressed with the richness of the culture created by the Sepik people in one of the most challenging tropical environments on earth.



The Asmat

The island of New Guinea is divided in half politically—the result of complex past dealings among various colonial powers. The eastern half (containing almost the whole of the Sepik River basin) is the independent nation of Papua New Guinea (PNG), while the western half is part of Indonesia. The Indonesian territory was formerly known as Irian Jaya, but now is divided into two provinces, Papua and West Papua.

My second visit to New Guinea focused on the Indonesian side, and began on the island of Sulawesi in the center of the Indonesia. We sailed east through the extraordinary array of islands and coral reefs known as Raja Ampat, and then along New Guinea's southern coast to the remote and rarely visited Asmat in the province of Papua.

The Asmat refers both to a vast territory of southwestern New Guinea, and to the ethnic and linguistic group of people inhabiting the region. They were not in regular contact with Westerners until the 1950s, and remain one of the least assimilated cultures on that wildest of islands. Their tradition of head-hunting and ritual cannibalism is one reason why they were given a wide berth by early Western explorers. Eventually, however, their extraordinarily skilled and powerful woodcarvings became known to the outside world, drawing collectors—most famously Michael Rockefeller, heir to the Rockefeller fortune, who disappeared on a collecting trip to the Asmat in 1961. While it will never be definitively proven, a recent book has argued persuasively that Rockefeller was killed and eaten after his boat overturned.

Zegrahm is one of the very few expedition companies to visit the Asmat, and is able to do so only because of the long connections of our Indonesian tour manager to the area. So, join me on our visit to the village of Komor, which had not received outsiders in seven years prior to our arrival.

It had been a long run up the broad, shallow river, the color of milky tea. We were packed shoulder to shoulder, sitting on the rounded bulwarks of our Zodiacs, the inflatable boats carrying us from our small expedition cruise ship to our day's adventure. At first, the sight of our six Zodiacs speeding in formation upriver, with brightly colored parrots flying overhead, and with herons flapping away at our approach, had been a thrilling spectacle. Now, after an hour in the hot sun, the main thing keeping us awake was our sore backsides.

Then, up ahead, the lead Zodiac slowed. Mike Messick, our expedition leader, and Leksmono Santoso, our Indonesian expert and agent, stood up. We could see them consulting, and Leks pointed ahead. Only then did we see that a line of dugout canoes was arrayed across the river in the distance. Our boats all gathered together, and we motored slowly forward. Soon



TOP: A villager demonstrates the arduous process of making sago.

BOTTOM: It truly takes a village to make sago, a staple food.

PREVIOUS PAGE: An Asaro Mudman, complete with clicking bamboo fingers and an otherworldly mud mask.

enough, we could see that each dugout was filled with six or seven imposing bare-chested men, most adorned with white pigment on the face and body, and wearing crowns, armbands, and necklaces of feathers and animal fur.

As we neared the dugouts, the men suddenly burst out in hoarse and threatening shouts, shook their boating poles and paddles, furiously splashed the water, and flung clouds of mysterious white powder at our boats. Seeing us all cowering in the face of this impressive and chaotic display, Leks gave a broad smile, threw up his arms, and shouted "Welcome to the Asmat!" Sorry, but when Asmat warriors perform a traditional village "greeting," complete with threats to demonstrate their intimidating strength, no amount of preparation beforehand will keep you from being intimidated.

Their "greeting" complete, the village men broke into wide smiles and escorted our boats to shore, where the whole village



Sago harvesting in the forest.

had gathered to watch the spectacle. The Asmat region is mostly low-lying swamp forest, with tides that reach far up the shallow rivers. Villages are built on slightly higher ground, but many are seasonally flooded, and the houses are raised on stilts. As each of us clambered off the Zodiacs, we were taken by the arm by one of the villagers, and gently escorted over the muddy banks and up to the village. There we were approached by a dignified older man, who, without warning, mashed a handful of something both mushy and gritty on the top of our heads. To this day, I have no idea what it was (later, a guest confided that he was worried it might be seasoning!). Then, we were presented with a gift to wear—a feather crown or a “dilly bag,” the woven sack, worn like a necklace, that is the ubiquitous carry-all in New Guinea.

This ceremony concluded, our escort led us to meet his or her family. After introductions, conducted with great good will, if considerable mutual confusion, we climbed into the dim long house for speeches of welcome, translated by Leks. As a token of hospitality, a tin bowl filled with large and squirming “sago worms”—the grubs of a giant beetle—was passed around. Many of the expedition staff felt that the rules of hospitality required us to partake of this treat. But that left us with a difficult choice: “pop” the cocktail-sausage sized grub with our teeth to expose its gooey insides, or swallow it whole. Personally, I chose to swallow it whole, a decision I instantly regretted as I could feel the sago worm squirming as it made its way down my throat.

We then gathered in circles with our hosts for what was described as an “adoption ceremony.” Our anthropologist later explained that we were standing in for deceased members of our “family.” In the course of sharing—with gestures and a few mutu-



Making friends in the highlands.

ally understood words—stories of our own families and our own lost loved ones, a powerful and mysterious connection was made.

At last, it was almost sunset, and past time to begin the long return trip to the ship, anchored offshore. The tide had dropped, and the expanse of riverside mud was far wider than earlier. The villagers had thoughtfully arranged a line of dugouts across the mud for us to cross, with poles driven into the mud for handholds. Waving farewell to our new friends on shore, we piled into the Zodiacs and headed downriver under a spectacular sunset, with scores of giant fruit bats flying overhead on their way to the night’s foraging. An incredible end to a day I will never forget.

The Highlands

The highlands of New Guinea are a world apart from the steamy and water-logged lowlands. Here, around 9000 years ago, a unique form of agriculture was invented, based on yams, taro, bananas, and sugar cane. Obviously this was independent of the grain-based agriculture being developed in the Middle East around the same time. The rich volcanic soils of the highlands were so productive that the population of the highlands became some of the densest in the tropics.

It was long assumed that the mountainous interior of New Guinea was largely uninhabited, and amazingly it was not until 1930 that the first Westerners—three Australian brothers searching for gold—reached the highlands and found vast fertile valleys filled with farming villages. It is now believed that the highlands at “first contact” had a population of almost a million people!

Today, the highlands, especially the area around the town of Mt. Hagen in Papua New Guinea, are the focus of New Guinea’s small tourism industry. Visitors come to the highlands for two principal reasons: to view the extraordinary birds of paradise and the equally extraordinary “sing sing” gatherings, in which villages compete to display the most elaborate regalia, composed mostly of bird of paradise feathers.

At the conclusion of the cruise that took us to the Asmat, I had the opportunity to lead a small group of travelers on a trip to the highlands, where we stayed at the Rondon Ridge Lodge overlooking the Wahgi Valley and the town of Mt. Hagen. Here, both the natural and cultural treasures of New Guinea were on full display.

I’m an ornithologist, and seeing birds of paradise has been a lifelong dream. There are 42 species in the family Paradisaeidae, almost all of which are found only on New Guinea and nearby islands (a few of the duller species reach northern Australia). The males of most species are adorned with extravagant plumes, and perform elaborate displays, often in groups, to attract females.

Specimens of birds of paradise first reached Europe via early trading expeditions to the East in the 16th century. The bird skins had been prepared by native traders by removing the wings and feet, but leaving the fluffy underwing display plumes. The footless and wingless condition of the skins led to the belief that the birds never landed but were kept permanently aloft by their plumes. Thus, they came to be called the birds of paradise.

Rondon Ridge is home to several of the most spectacular birds of paradise, or BOPs, including the Blue BOP, the Superb BOP, and the one I most hoped to see, the King of Saxony Bird of Paradise. But first, we set off to experience the culture of the highlands.



TOP: Mt. Hagen “sing sing” gathering.

BOTTOM: Nutrient-rich sago worms are considered a treat.

Different villages demonstrated different cultural traditions. One of the most impressive, if the least colorful, is the Mudmen. This tradition originated in the Goroka region east of Mt. Hagen. Legend has it that members of the Asaro tribe were fleeing from an enemy, and took refuge in a nearby river. They waited until dusk before attempting to escape. The enemy saw them rise from the banks covered in mud and thought they were vengeful spirits. The enemy warriors fled in fear, and the Asaro escaped. The effect is now enhanced with massive mud masks covering the head, and long bamboo fingers that snap menacingly. If I was an enemy warrior, this would definitely have worked on me!

The most famous New Guinea cultural tradition is of course the adornment of warriors with the feathers of birds of paradise and other birds, along with body paint, pig tusks, and other

In my “day job” with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, I work to fight the illegal trade in the feathers of protected birds, and so my reaction to the feathers on display was complicated.

decorations. We were honored with several such displays, and the feathers were truly spectacular.

In my “day job” with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, I work to fight the illegal trade in the feathers of protected birds, and so my reaction to the feathers on display was complicated. As a conservation biologist, I am concerned about the killing of wild birds for their feathers. But I also honor cultural diversity and indigenous traditions. According to experts on the birds of paradise, the traditional use of feathers in New Guinea may impact local populations of the birds, but does not threaten the survival of any of the species. A more serious threat could arise from international trade in bird of paradise feathers. All species in the bird of paradise family are protected under international treaty, meaning their feathers cannot be exported or sold without official permits. On all the trips I lead, the guests and I discuss conservation issues relevant to the areas we are visiting, and our conversations in New Guinea were some of the most thoughtful.

Back at Rondon Ridge, I had been thrilled to observe the Superb and Blue Birds of Paradise in the forests near the lodge. The King of Saxony Bird of Paradise, however, could only be found at higher elevations, requiring a long, steep, and slippery hike through dense forest to the top of the ridge. And, because the birds display only at dawn, the hike up to their courtship area had to be in the dark, so as to be on the spot at sunrise.

Why was I so determined to see this particular species? Because they have perhaps the most amazing feathers of all the birds of paradise. Compared to other species, they have few ornamental plumes: just two, to be exact. But what plumes they are! One long feather projects from each side of the head, and is composed of a series of shiny, pale blue plates. These plates are formed by fusion of the feather barbs, and are unique structures, found in no other bird. The antenna-like feathers can be moved independently in display, and each is much longer than the body length of the bird. So, for a student of feathers like myself, seeing the King of Saxony Bird of Paradise is an ultimate dream.

The hike was as long, steep, and slippery as advertised, following a rough path hacked in the red clay. Our headlamps illuminated only a few steps ahead, and there always seemed to be a root lurking just out of sight, ready to trip us up. But we struggled upward, and as first light began to penetrate the forest, we heard an extraordinary call, like pouring water, or pebbles dropping through a “rainstick”, followed by a weird sound



One of New Guinea’s most well-known cultural traditions is the adornment of warriors with the feathers of birds of paradise and other birds.

like an electronic buzzer. Our local guide, Joseph, whispered “King of Saxony!” and urged us to hurry. Now we needed no encouragement!

In another hundred yards or so, we reached the top of the ridge, a surreal forest of giant Pandanus (like huge pineapples on stilts), tree ferns, bamboo, and towering forest trees. In the top of one of the trees, silhouetted against the dawn sky, was the

King of Saxony Bird of Paradise. For the next hour, we watched three males display, whipping those amazing plumes around and giving their otherworldly calls. If you want to see the display for yourself, there is a great short video at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXrSnS7nANs>.

All too soon, the day began to heat up, and the birds of paradise flew off to search for fruit in the shade of the forest. We made the long descent back to the lodge in silence. Yet again, New Guinea had given us an experience so strange and wonderful that we hesitated to put it into words.



Pepper Trail is a writer and conservation biologist living in Ashland.

Firefighters are being arranged into units that can function like households.

Oregon Prepares To Fight Wildfire During Coronavirus Pandemic

One thing that isn't being canceled this summer because of the coronavirus pandemic is wildfire season, so training for hundreds of wildland firefighters has changed to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

There is a lot of hand-washing, new outdoor classrooms and social distancing rules, and there's no practicing with live fire because the smoke would increase health risks — both for the firefighters and the people who live nearby.

"You could have between 1,000 and 3,000 people living in a fire camp," he said. "They're naturally known for not being the most sanitary places to live when you're out there sleeping in tents and in the dirt."

Firefighters living in fire camps often work exhausting 16 hour days and share the same spaces for meals and showers.

"So it's an environment that's just ripe for transmission," Larson said. "There's been a history of camp crud running through, just the different colds people get."

The state is planning to redesign its fire camps to reduce the risk of an outbreak among firefighters, according to ODF spokesman Jim Gersbach.

"The goal will be to maintain social distance and minimize the mixing of people," he said. "There will be a real look at who needs to be at the fire camp and what can be done remotely."

Firefighters are being arranged into units that can function like households, he said, so they will only interact with each other and use the same equipment for the season.

"You treat your work unit like you would your household," he said. "When they go to the campground, they stay away from other families. They will be assigned one engine, and they will eat together, camp together."

"Lots of logistical things are already routine for fire camp administrators," he said. "They've just got one more thing to add to the mix."

Officials are expecting an above-average fire season this year, and so far Oregon has seen more wildfires than usual. However, Gersbach noted the fires on lands protected by ODF have been smaller this year, with just 190 acres burned so far compared to the 10-year average of 1,409 acres burned by Monday.

For firefighter training in Southern Oregon in June, ODF implemented new procedures for hand-washing and sanitizing equipment. Each trainee is required to self-administer a "fit for duty" check that involves taking their own temperature and reporting any symptoms of COVID-19 before reporting to work.

The agency created new outdoor classrooms by putting chairs 6 feet apart in their bus barns, and it separated trainees



Firefighters use a hand-washing station with socially distanced sinks at a training event in June, 2020.



Ayva Burkhart practices a firefighting technique called "pump and roll." It would normally involve putting out a live fire, but this year's training eliminated live fire to avoid the health risks of smoke during the coronavirus pandemic.

into smaller groups that require less space to maintain social distancing.

Larson said agency leaders are "writing the book as we go" while trying to follow federal and state guidelines for reducing the risk of an outbreak among firefighters.

"We've always had an aggressive firefighting strategy, and that's not changing," he said. "But if you were on your day off and you got called to a fire, normally you'd jump in any available engine and be off. That's not going to be the case today."



Cassandra Profita is a reporter for OPB's Science & Environment unit.

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American journalism is in a downward spiral, but the solution is not more technology and the replacement of journalists with AI systems.

Technology And The Death Of American Journalism



American journalism started out weak in 1690 when the first newspaper, *Publick Occurrences*, was shut down by the British government just 4 days after its first publication. But American journalism persevered and became foundational to our fledgling democracy. So important was journalism that its protection was written into the First Amendment to the Constitution.

Thomas Jefferson summed up the importance of journalism by writing, “were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

American journalism flourished for a bit then got cancer as it became increasingly commercialized. That cancer of commercialization grew and metastasized as various network news stations, newspapers, and media outlets were subsumed by increasingly larger corporate conglomerates.

In 1983, 90 percent of U.S. media was controlled by 50 companies. By 2012, 90 percent was owned by 6 companies. Today, 90 percent is controlled by just 4 companies with AT&T at the top.

The problem with consolidation of media ownership was summed up well by Ben Bagdikian, former dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at UC Berkeley: “With the country’s widest disseminators of news, commentary and ideas firmly entrenched among a small number of the world’s wealthiest corporations, it may not be surprising that their news and commentary is limited to an unrepresentative narrow spectrum of politics.”

In addition to corporate consolidation, American journalism was imperiled by the emergence of new technologies. The rise of the Internet and the advent of the World Wide Web as a cheap publisher of information fundamentally changed how information was created and disseminated.

Information wants to be free, but media organizations—and the corporations they are a part of—want to get paid, generate profits, and produce “shareholder value”.

When a new technology is introduced to culture, it does not simply just change this or that—it changes everything.

News organizations, especially print news, struggled to adapt. Some faltered. Some went out of business. Others survived. But most were merged into larger news organizations that were, in turn, acquired by large corporations.

For example, CNN (Cable News Network) was launched by Turner Broadcasting System in 1980 as the world’s first

24-hour cable news channel. Today, Turner is a subsidiary of WarnerMedia, which owns CNN Worldwide. WarnerMedia is owned by AT&T, which today is the world’s largest media company based on revenue.

In 2009, in response to a question about the decline of American newspapers and the tenuous state of journalism, then-president Barack Obama replied: “I am concerned that if the direction of the news is all blogosphere, all opinions, with no serious fact-checking, no serious attempts to put stories in context, that what you will end up getting is people shouting at each other across the void but not a lot of mutual understanding.”

A little more than a decade later and here we are shouting across the void at each other. And things are probably going to get worse—perhaps a lot worse—before they have a chance of getting any better.

Last month, Microsoft announced that it was laying off dozens of in-house journalists and editors from Microsoft News and replacing them with AI (artificial intelligence) bots.

Launched just two years ago, Microsoft News stated that it “represents the ways we keep people informed across the web, phone and PC, using our long-tested approach of curating news via publishing partnerships, human editors, and AI.”

I’m skeptical that outsourcing journalism to AI will make things better. It likely will make things a lot worse.

Unlike humans, AI systems are 100 percent loyal to the corporations that own them. They cannot think for themselves (not yet anyway). They do not have a conscience or morals. They will not question authority. AI systems run algorithms and do exactly what they are programmed to do.

AI algorithms are increasingly shaping our perception of the world, telling us what to think about, what to believe. We program the algorithms then they program us.

Imagine a world in which AI systems are gathering, editing, and disseminating the news. If you think that CNN or Fox News are biased in their news coverage with thousands of employees world-wide who have varying political leanings and diverse cultural backgrounds and ethnicities, wait until you’re getting your news from a finely-tuned, homogeneous, and algorithmically-driven AI system that utilizes sophisticated machine-learning to improve. An AI news system like this will edit video clips, write headlines, and package news stories targeted at its audience in a way far superior to the respective cybernetic hive-minds of CNN and Fox News.

Inside The Box

Continued from page 17

And that would be just the beginning. Once optimized, an AI news system could (and likely would) become an extremely effective propaganda machine with the capability to manufacture whatever reality it was programmed to generate at which point journalism, as a means of providing the public with the information it needs to make informed decisions and be self-governing, would be stone-cold dead as would be the democracy that depends on it.

American journalism is in a downward spiral, but the solution is not more technology and the replacement of journalists with AI systems. Nor is it more of the same corporate-owned commercial journalism that got us to where we are today.

"Journalism must be understood as a public good," write Robert McChesney and John Nichols in their book *The Death and Life of American Journalism*. "It is something of value to society that the market once produced...But the circumstances that made possible that production no longer exist and the market is ceasing to nurture or sustain substantial journalism."

McChesney and Nichols advocate that what is needed to revive American journalism is substantially more publicly owned journalism: "Americans have to face the hard and cold truth: journalism is a public good that is no longer commercially viable. If we want journalism, it will require subsidies and enlightened policies."

"Without a civic counterbalance to the vagaries of the market," they warn, "it is entirely within the realm of possibility that journalism could wither and die. Its replacement would be not a void but the sophisticated propaganda of a modern age in which it is possible to tell people much of what they need to know to consume products and support spurious wars but nothing that they need to know to be voters and citizens."

As our country heads into another tumultuous presidential election year, I fear that we've gone from "shouting at each other across the void" to shouting into the void of our variously technologically constructed and media controlled echo chambers where the possibility of any mutual understanding is non-existent.

The solutions to our problems are not more technology nor further commercialization and homogenization of American media. The solutions to our problems are to be found where they've always been found. I hope you and I are up to the challenge.



Scott Dewing is a technologist, writer, and educator with a B.A. in Journalism from the University of Oregon. He lives on a low-tech farm in the State of Jefferson.



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I'll Lock Thy Heaven From Thee

(*Timon of Athens*)

After a period when it seemed that theatre might return after a relatively short break, we now know that the OSF 2020 season will not resume, and we wait to see when other, smaller companies (including orchestras and choirs which have also been forced to cancel performances) will be able to entertain us once more.

It seems that London theatres are not expected to open until 2021, and that productions of large-scale shows such as musicals may be delayed even further: the world of theatrical performance does not lend itself to social distancing, not for audiences. Do we wait in line to enter and to leave the theatre, like boarding and disembarking a plane but keeping six feet apart at all times? And how would this work for performers? Would we find Romeo and Juliet in twin beds at opposite sides of the stage?

Furthermore, there is likely to be concern as to whether it is really safe to go to public events once more, even if such events are allowed to take place. There were some who felt uneasy about returning to the workplace after lockdown. Will there be similar fears about returning to the theatre? Oddly enough, during the devastating flu epidemic of 1918, there were calls to keep theatres open to boost morale. Ultimately, they were closed, along with churches and schools—but bars and restaurants stayed open.

OSF began shutting down its operations on March 12, somewhat before all Oregon theatres were required to close. This was a brave decision, and one for which we should be grateful. Large numbers of people from outside of the region attend OSF productions, especially in the spring and summer, many coming from out of state. It seems very likely that, had the OSF theatres not closed as early as they did, the risk of people in our region being affected by the coronavirus would have increased greatly. But this was not a decision which was without its costs, both financial and human: hundreds of staff have been laid off, for what was first predicted as a matter of weeks, then several months, and now an entire season: in some cases, posts have been entirely eliminated. In such circumstances and after such sacrifices, it seems only right not to re-open prematurely, exposing audiences, cast and crew to potential risk.

What do I write about when theatres are closed? In Shakespeare's day, when the Plague struck, theatres in the city closed,

but theatrical troupes did their best to continue to perform: they sought wealthy patrons and staged plays in their country houses. Something similar is happening now, as companies seek alternatives to conventional theatres. Some have chosen to make available recordings of earlier performances, filmed in front of a live audience. For example, there has been online streaming of older productions from the National Theatre in London—a different play each week. These have been free, as have similar

streaming efforts from Shakespeare's Globe, as well as performances of opera from the archives of the New York Met, and more theatres take to streaming each day.

The experience of watching these recorded performances at home is very different from that of attending live theatre. For one thing, your viewpoint is mediated by the director, who decides what you should see; only rarely do the cameras allow a view of the whole stage, and you may not be able to see what is important to you. For example, in a recorded performance of *Twelfth Night* from the National Theatre, there was a scene in which Viola played the guitar, but the camera focused on Olivia's reaction, and we did not see Viola playing at all. This "mediated theatre" is quite a different art form.

In early May, OSF began its own journey into the digital world, launching O!, an interactive and immersive digital content platform (which can be accessed for free at <https://osfashland.uscreen.io>). Currently the site's offerings include audio versions of some OSF productions, discussions, and some early documentaries about the company. Eventually it may offer pay-per-view video content.

Another platform which has been pressed into the service of theatre frequently in recent months is Zoom. Although it is initially disconcerting to see the heads of the performers in boxes on your TV screen (rather like contestants in *Hollywood Squares*—or *Celebrity Squares* for my British readers), the conventions of Zoom quickly become familiar, and there is a certain frisson in the fact that, because Zoom erodes the boundary between public and private spaces, it is possible to steal a glimpse into the houses of those participating.

The potential of Zoom as a dramatic medium in its own right is already being explored—for example, in *In-Zoom*, a



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Theatre

Continued from page 19

10-minute play created by Bill Irwin which premiered live online in May on the website of the San Diego Old Globe. Zoom has proved a popular way for actors and musicians to rehearse together while remaining physically distant, and it has become fundamental to "First Reads", an initiative by Play on! Shakespeare. This venture attempts to reproduce the moment when actors first come together with the director and dramaturg to read a script. I shall write more about this project in my September column, but your homework for now is to sample the site at <https://playonfestival.org/firstreads/>

Thanks to "First Reads", I had the opportunity to hear *Edward III*, and thanks to Shakespeare's Globe I saw *Two Noble Kinsmen*, plays I'd never experienced before, and I now feel better able to join in the debate as to whether these plays merit a place in the Shakespearean canon.



Geoff Ridden has taught in universities in Africa, Europe and North America. Since moving to Ashland in 2008, he has become a familiar figure on radio, in the theatre, in the lecture hall and on the concert stage. He is artistic director of the Classic Readings Theatre Company and has a particular interest in adaptations of the plays of Shakespeare. Email geoff.ridden@gmail.com

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Having seen many religions and political movements claim with absolute moral clarity that their beliefs are the only valid ones, I'm reluctant to don that mantle myself.

'Both-Sides Journalism' vs. 'A Place Of Moral Clarity'

We live in interesting times ... pandemic, economic disaster, civil unrest, extreme partisanship.

And as the people whose job it is to inform their neighbors what's going on in their world, we journalists, in particular, are struggling to keep up with the titanic shifts that make these times so "interesting." A recent controversy at the New York Times illustrates one seismic fault line everyone in the news business is having to wrestle with.

The Times' Op-Ed page recently published a piece by Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) provocatively titled, "Send in the Troops," in which he called for the U.S. military to be used to put down the sometimes violent protests that arose after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in late May.

"Rioters have plunged many American cities into anarchy, recalling the widespread violence of the 1960s," Cotton wrote. "One thing above all else will restore order to our streets: an overwhelming show of force to disperse, detain and ultimately deter lawbreakers."

The piece received intense criticism, not just for its broad assertions lacking factual evidence, but also for advocating a stunning break with the principle that the military stays out of domestic affairs. Many journalists, including dozens in the Times' newsroom, felt the piece endangered them, given the well over 300 documented cases of working journalists being arrested, injured or targeted by law enforcement while covering the unrest. Senior editor Kwame Opam tweeted "Running this puts Black @nytimes staff in danger." Others tweeted similar sentiments.

Editorial page editor James Bennet initially defended publishing the piece, saying, "Times Opinion owes it to our readers to show them counter-arguments, particularly those made by people in a position to set policy."

But within two days, the Times said publishing the op-ed was a mistake, the result of "a rushed editorial process" that "did not meet our standards." Bennet—widely considered a likely successor to the executive editor job in a few years, resigned.

American journalism reeled. What just happened? Times columnist Michelle Goldberg's take was that the extremist positions increasingly being staked out by Cotton and his Republican colleagues had upended the traditional approach to op-ed pages, an approach Bennett had championed.

"It's important to understand what the people around the president are thinking. But if they're honest about what they're thinking, it's usually too disgusting to engage with. This creates



a crisis for traditional understandings of how the so-called marketplace of ideas functions."

New York University journalism professor and media critic Jay Rosen expanded on that observation.

"Debate club democracy — where people of good will share a common world of fact but disagree on what should be done — is an expensive illusion to maintain during a presidency that tries to undermine every independent and factual check there is on the executive's power, not just a free press and its journalism, but the intelligence community, the diplomatic corps, the civil service, government scientists, inspectors general, and Congress in its oversight function... This isn't debate club. It's an attack on the institutions of American democracy."

Writing in Vox, Zach Beauchamp said this isn't to argue for limiting the range of opinions to a particular ideological viewpoint.

"Rather, it's a question of how journalists should think about their roles as guardians of mainstream discourse. Does every idea that's popular in power, no matter how poorly considered, deserve some kind of respectful airing in mainstream publications? Or are there boundaries, both of quality of argument and

On The Scene

Continued from page 21

moral decency, where editors need to draw the line – especially in the Trump era?”

Wesley Lowery, formerly of the Washington Post and now with 60 Minutes, made the point sharply in a June 3 tweet: “American view-from-nowhere, “objectivity”-obsessed, both-sides journalism is a failed experiment. We need to fundamentally reset the norms of our field. The old way must go. We need to rebuild our industry as one that operates from a place of moral clarity.”

That rang an alarm with NYT’s international columnist Roger Cohen. He agrees that journalistic “objectivity” is a fallacy—it doesn’t exist and never did. But, recalling his interviews with Serbian warlords during the “ethnic cleansing” in Bosnia in the 1990s, Cohen says ...

“I still believe in both-sides journalism. ‘A place of moral clarity’ can easily mean there is only one truth, and if you deviate from it, you are done for. The liberal idea that freedom is served by open debate, even with people holding repugnant views, is worth defending. If conformity wins, democracy dies.”

I tend to share Roger Cohen’s discomfort with the call to base journalism in “moral clarity.” Having seen many religions and political movements claim with absolute moral clarity that their beliefs are the only valid ones, I’m reluctant to don that mantle myself. I still think well-informed readers and listeners can be trusted to sort out conflicting political perspectives.

Which gets to the core of journalism’s *raison d’être*; to give the citizens of a democracy factual information and exposure to a range of reasonable viewpoints so they can debate the merits among themselves and base their votes and other civic engagement on quality ideas.

But with a social media universe that’s become increasingly detached from reality, when top White House advisors promote “alternative facts” with a straight face, when major party nominees for Senate and House seats endorse absurd conspiracy theories, the times do seem to call for a more robust defense of the just, the humane, dare I say, the moral. We seem to be reaching a point where splitting the difference between opposing perspectives and calling it good just isn’t good enough anymore.

So, like it or not, finding an honest, ethically-sound way through the confusion to a new place of balance seems to be the work that lies ahead of us.



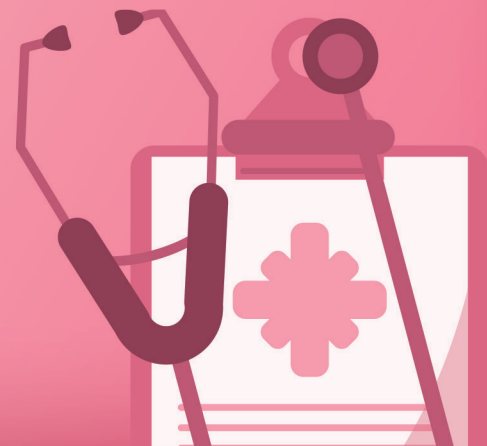
Liam Moriarty has been covering news in the Pacific Northwest for more than 20 years. After a stint as JPR’s News Director from 2002 to 2005, Liam covered the environment in Seattle, then reported on European issues from France. He returned to JPR in 2013, turning his talents to covering the stories that are important to the people of this very special region.

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Those of us who have never directly experienced it have woken up to the fact that our country is not, in fact, a shining city on the hill, but a country where black parents have had to instruct their sons and daughters how to “show their hands” and not wear hoodies so they won’t get shot by the police for just being kids.

Behind The Mask

Back when we were unmasked and innocent, we had our worries and fears. But they seem so petty now. It’s hard to remember what scared us back then: gluten? tweets? breaking a hip? Seems so insignificant compared to what fresh hell we wake up to each day.

But we’ve also had moments of grace and enlightenment. Mostly, like all moments of grace and enlightenment, these were born out of intense fear and throat-drying panic. Mask wearing inspired many to dust off their Singer sewing machines and sew masks for themselves, neighbors, friends and first line health care workers. I have grown to really like wearing protective masks. Not only do they help lessen the spread of a virus we haven’t fully contained, but they offer a fantastic way to avoid that talkative guy who is always at Raley’s wanting to tell you about his new hobby, carving spoons out of driftwood or making birdhouses out of sea shells. That guy as well as all your former students can’t recognize you anymore, especially if you, like me, wear a hat and sunglasses with your paisley printed face mask. So we’ve got that going for us.

There is a newish saying going around that is also inspired by the world gone mad. It’s called, “being woke.” I looked it up and one definition says that being woke is, “...a cultural push to challenge problematic norms, systemic injustices and the overall status quo...” I think many of us have experienced this challenge, especially those of us who have felt that the tide of systemic racial injustice was never going to turn; that the Emmett Tills and most recently, George Floyds were never going to experience equal justice under the law. But the recent protests across the country, in big cities and especially in rural communities, has made the issue of police brutality a national concern. Those of us who have never directly experienced it have woken up to the fact that our country is not, in fact, a shining city on the hill, but a country where black parents have had to instruct their sons and daughters how to “show their hands” and not wear hoodies so they won’t get shot by the police for just being kids.

The town of Yreka had over 300 protesters at their rally, a number that is pretty phenomenal considering the conservative bent of Siskiyou County. Protests all over the State of Jefferson were similarly enthusiastic and that is an indicator of people waking up and seeing this problem as one that affects the heart and soul of our country. Too little, too late for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery and the countless



Madeleine DeAndreis-Ayres and husband Jim. The couple that masks together stays together.

other victims of racial violence, but...I was going to try and end that sentence with some kind of positive statement, but I think I’ll just let it stand at that. Too little, too late.

As I try to wind this up, the Supreme Court, in a remarkable ruling, hits the ball out of the park by deciding that federal law prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The 6-3 decision with Trump appointee Justice Gorsuch writing for the majority, upholds the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which explicitly requires equal treatment of individuals regardless of gender. I must confess, I did not see that coming but have to say that the dim light on the hill got a little brighter for equal rights with that heroic decision.

Let’s continue to push those “problematic norms and systematic injustices.” And, I for one, am going to continue wearing a mask because (a) I want to avoid that guy at Raley’s and (b) I want to live long enough to see justice for all.



Madeleine DeAndreis-Ayres still dances but does it safely and always brings a designated driver.

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7:00pm Deutsche Welle Festival Concerts
9:00pm State Farm Music Hall

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by Christoph Willibald von Gluck

July 25 – *I Puritani* by Vincenzo Bellini

August 1 – *Carmen* by Georges Bizet
August 8 – *The Clemency of Titus*
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

August 15 – *La Bohème*
by Giacomo Puccini

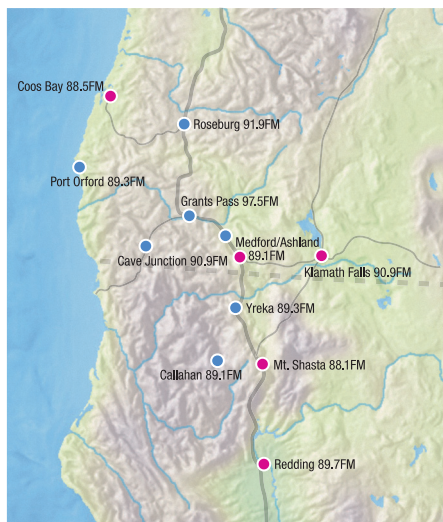
August 22 – *Aida*
by Giuseppe Verdi

August 29 – *L'Orfeo*
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Rhythm & News Service



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8:00pm Undercurrents
3:00am World Café

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9:00am Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!
10:00am American Routes
12:00pm E-Town
1:00pm Mountain Stage
3:00pm Live From Here with Chris Thile
5:00pm All Things Considered
6:00pm American Rhythm
8:00pm Q the Music / 99% Invisible

9:00pm The Retro Lounge
10:00pm Late Night Blues
12:00am Undercurrents

Sunday

5:00am Weekend Edition
9:00am TED Radio Hour
10:00am This American Life
11:00am The Moth Radio Hour
12:00pm American Rhythm
2:00pm American Routes
4:00pm Sound Opinions
5:00pm All Things Considered
6:00pm Live From Here with Chris Thile
8:00pm Folk Alley
10:00pm Woodsongs Old Time Radio Hour
11:00pm Mountain Stage
1:00am Undercurrents

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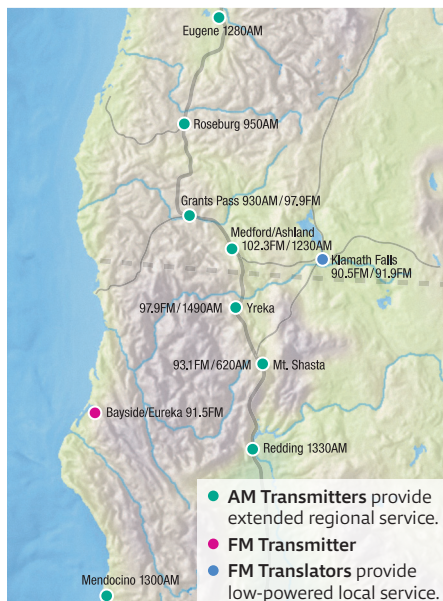
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2:00pm 1A
3:00pm Fresh Air
4:00pm PRI's The World
5:00pm On Point
7:00pm Fresh Air (repeat)
8:00pm The Jefferson Exchange (repeat of 8am broadcast)
10:00pm BBC World Service

Saturday

5:00am BBC World Service
7:00am Inside Europe
8:00am Day 6
9:00am Freakonomics Radio
10:00am Planet Money
11:00am Hidden Brain
12:00pm Living on Earth
1:00pm Science Friday
3:00pm To the Best of Our Knowledge
5:00pm Politics with Amy Walter
6:00pm Selected Shorts
7:00pm BBC World Service

Sunday

5:00am BBC World Service
8:00am On The Media
9:00am Innovation Hub
10:00am Reveal
11:00am This American Life
12:00pm TED Radio Hour
1:00pm Political Junkie
2:00pm Fresh Air Weekend
3:00pm Milk Street Radio
4:00pm Travel with Rick Steves
5:00pm To the Best of Our Knowledge
7:00pm BBC World Service

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Grants Pass 97.9 FM
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KAGI AM 930
GRANTS PASS

KTBR AM 950
ROSEBURG

KRVM AM 1280
EUGENE

KSYC AM 1490
YREKA

KMJC AM 620
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EMILY CURETON

Rural Oregon Leaders Mull Revolt Against COVID-19 Reopening Rules

Resentments over restrictions boiled over in rural communities with few COVID-19 cases, as local leaders watch large crowds demonstrate for racial equality while church and other gatherings remain prohibited.

The invitation arrived addressed to “friends, colleagues and Brothers and Sisters in-arms!”

“I’m asking you to join with me for a face to face meeting ... to talk about how we will draw up our battle plans,” Lake County Commissioner Mark Albertson wrote in a June 5 email.

By noon the following Thursday, a dozen rural county commissioners were in Prairie City, an eastern Oregon town with about a thousand residents.

Clad in a black suit jacket and cowboy hat, Prairie City Mayor Jim Hamsher welcomed them to a visitor center reminiscent of an Old West saloon. Deschutes County Commissioner Tony DeBone brought snacks. In all, representatives from seven Oregon counties, including a majority of commissioners from four counties, showed up to an event that wasn’t publicly announced and appears to have been held in violation of Oregon’s open meetings law.

Some of the officials drove more than three hours to get there.

The rendezvous came after months of conference calls with state health officials, amid mounting frustration with Oregon Gov. Kate Brown’s authority over reopening and state control of federal aid.

The meeting played out in three acts: an airing of grievances, a brainstorming session of demands, and a discussion of possible repercussions for rebelling against state authorities.

The resentments boiled over at a time when mass demonstrations for racial equality that taken place all over the state, though the commissioners focused primarily on large demonstrations in Portland.

“Us on this side of the mountain are not treated the same. And so, how is that any different than racism? We are culturally oppressed by our state government,” Albertson said.

“Either we’re not all the same, or we are all the same. There are two sets of rules. And that played out very well in the last week and half,” agreed Wallowa County Commissioner Susan Roberts.

The meeting between the rural commissioners happened just hours before Brown announced she would be pausing reopening plans statewide for at least a week due to a notable rise in coronavirus cases.

Cancelled graduations, closed schools and statewide rules about how to conduct business were top of mind.



Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer, right, with Deschutes County Commissioner Tony DeBone, at a meeting of local officials in Prairie City, Oregon, June 11, 2020.

CREDIT: EMILY CURETON/OPB

"I'm more concerned with our loss of rights to have a county fair," Albertson said.

The elected officials he convened serve counties that make up a third of Oregon by land, but just 4% of its coronavirus cases, and no deaths identified by the Oregon Health Authority as of Thursday.

"You can have 5,000 people on the streets rioting. Five hundred in a Wal-Mart. But, you can't have more than 10 in a day-care? These are the things that just irritate me," Roberts said.

The meeting played out in three acts: an airing of grievances, a brainstorming session of demands, and a discussion of possible repercussions for rebelling against state authorities.

The commissioners asked questions like, will the governor withhold federal CARES Act funding passed through the state?

Albertson posed: "Are we going to be sued as a county for not upholding the emergency orders? ... Are we stepping outside the bounds of our elected capacity and could we be sued personally?"

Over the course of the two-hour meeting, commissioners time and again took issue with how the plan for lifting all restrictions hinges on having a treatment or cure for COVID-19.

Under Oregon's phased reopening plans, many activities can resume with limited social gatherings under Phase 2. The third and final phase of reopening would allow much of life to return to normal, but it's not on the immediate horizon for any county, and requires treatments available.



CREDIT: EMILY CURETON/OPB

Jim Hamsher, who is both Prairie City mayor and Grant County commissioner, listens to elected officials from rural Oregon vent about coronavirus restrictions, June 11, 2020.

"[Brown] is putting in a condition that is unattainable, and wonders why we're upset," said Harney County Commissioner Kristen Shelman. "We could all be rounded up and given a vaccine without our permission."

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Prairie City, Oregon, June 11, 2020.

CREDIT: EMILY CURETON/OPB

“A vaccine is not a cure,” said Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer, a registered nurse. “I’m one of the only nurses in my institution that never got the flu vaccine, and I’m one of the only nurses in my institution who’s never called in sick with influenza.”

Some commissioners questioned whether reopening criteria was really based on science.

Roberts of Wallowa County criticized Brown and state health authorities for not consulting people who live in rural communities when drafting rules that devastated their small businesses.

She said she wrote a letter asking Brown’s office to lift all restrictions in Wallowa County by June 30. Other county leaders hedged on a date, and said that it should be different from place to place.

Albertson, the Lake County commissioner who organized the meeting, asked the others to think about next steps.

“Are we going to be doing this again come Christmas? Or are we going to rise up?” he asked.

Hamsher, the Prairie City mayor who is also a Grant County commissioner, suggested they wait a couple of weeks to see if the wave of mass demonstrations would lead to a surge in cases, “and hopefully they don’t see a spike.”

Other attendees included Wallowa County Commissioner John Hillock; Jefferson County commissioners Mae Huston and Kelly Simmelink; and Union County commissioners Donna Beverage and Paul Anderes.

At one point, Huston held a file folder over her face, apparently in response to OPB and the Blue Mountain Eagle recording the meeting. She walked out early.

The day after the gathering, the Oregon Supreme Court upheld Brown’s authority. It said that a Baker County Circuit Court erred in its ruling that the governor’s executive orders relating to the coronavirus pandemic violated a 28-day statutory time limit, and had therefore expired.

The decision directs the circuit court to vacate the preliminary injunction it had entered. While the Baker County case is still open, the governor’s orders remain in effect.



Emily Cureton is OPB’s Central Oregon Bureau Chief. She formerly contributed award-winning programming to Georgia Public Broadcasting and Jefferson Public Radio, and reporting to community newspapers like the Del Norte TriPLICATE in Crescent City, California, and the Big Bend Sentinel in Marfa, Texas. She can be reached at ecureton@opb.org.

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American Red Cross managers across the West Coast say this year they're going to have to get creative to prevent the spread of the coronavirus among evacuees.

As Wildfire Season Nears, COVID-19 Raises Questions About Emergency Shelters

When a natural disaster like a wildfire hits, the Red Cross usually sets up an emergency shelter at a school gym or church. But the coronavirus pandemic will change that.

Normally, evacuees are crowded into a shared space where they sleep on cots with just a few feet between them. People share blankets, food, drinks, bathrooms and showers.

That's what happened after more than 700 households were evacuated from the 2017 Eagle Creek fire in the Columbia River Gorge. Many people stayed with friends or family, and the Red Cross arranged for others to camp at a nearby fairground or lodge at a local church.

Congregate disaster shelters like this can become a hotbed of germs. When the Paradise fire hit Northern California in 2018, the norovirus was going around. That infected hundreds of evacuees with diarrhea and vomiting, and it was messy.

American Red Cross managers across the West Coast say this year they're going to have to get creative to prevent the spread of the coronavirus among evacuees.

"We anticipate using what we call non-congregate sheltering which means we're going to put clients in hotels and motels first," said Medford-based regional Red Cross manager Joel King.

The details are still being worked out, but King said so far the plan is to rent all of the rooms at a given hotel. Meals will be delivered to their doors instead of served buffet-style, and the Red Cross will foot the bill. Red Cross officials are speaking to hotels about this plan, but they're not entering into official agreements, so there's no assurance that they'll have rooms available when a wildfire hits.

During wildfires, hotels tend to book up as people flee their homes in search of a place to stay. That was Redding, California, resident Jay Johnson's experience when he tried to find a hotel room during the 2018 Carr Fire.

"We got evacuated yesterday from West Redding," Johnson said the day after the fire jumped the Sacramento River and descended on Redding, on July 26, 2018. He was sitting on a cot with his family in the Shasta College gym, which was bustling with evacuees.

"We decided to go south to Anderson and stay in the Walmart parking lot because we figured out, after making phone calls along the way, that there was no hotels available anywhere," he said. "You had to go all the way to Sacramento in order to get a hotel."

Across the state border in Southern Oregon, Josephine County emergency coordinator Claire Wiener said hotel room



The Carr Fire burns across Whiskeytown Lake in July 2018.

availability may be a concern, since the county has been providing hotels to coronavirus patients who don't have stable housing.

"And that goes along with conversations that we've had with the Oregon Department of Forestry where we know that there's some potential for state fire crews and federal fire crews to be sheltered at hotels," she said.

Firefighters usually sleep in a camp and, much like disaster shelters occupants, they can easily spread germs. They even have a name for it: "camp crud."

Meanwhile, as counties start to reopen, hotels could start filling up with travelers. Despite all that, Wiener said she doubts there'll be an issue with room availability during a wildfire disaster, mostly because it hasn't happened before.

"I don't know of a situation in Josephine County where we have seen more than 50 people try to use a shelter at a time," Wiener said. "So I don't know that we're going to see a population to that extent where that would start to be an issue."

If there are mass evacuations, Red Cross officials say they'll consider other ways of sheltering people. That could include an outdoor congregate shelter — also known as a campground. But even with social distancing and diligent sanitizing, the coronavirus remains a threat.



April Ehrlich began freelancing for Jefferson Public Radio in 2016. She officially joined the team as *Morning Edition* host and a *Jefferson Exchange* producer in August 2017.

OPB staff contributed to this story.

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TOM BANSE

Impaired Driving Arrests Dropped During Pandemic, But That Doesn't Mean You're Drinking Less

Impaired driving citations have dropped sharply across Oregon and Washington this spring during the coronavirus pandemic.

There are multiple possible explanations for the decline, but people drinking and using drugs less does not appear to be a likely one.

Citations and warnings for impaired driving issued by the Oregon State Police fell 13% during the first three months of the pandemic. The OSP online data dashboard showed 664 impaired driving cases statewide in March-May 2020 compared to 760 during that period last year.

In the Willamette Valley, the Marion County Sheriff's Office experienced a 16% drop in DUI calls during March and April of this year versus last year. Data for May 2020 was not yet available.

Driving under the influence arrests by the Washington State Patrol decreased 46% statewide during March, April and May of this year versus the same three months of 2019. The agency told public radio that its troopers made 2,110 DUI arrests as the pandemic unfolded, compared to 3,877 arrests last spring.

State Patrol Sgt. Darren Wright said the drop is significant, but not a cause to celebrate. "When the pandemic was really starting and the stay-at-home order came into effect, we still had over 2,000 DUI arrests during that time," Wright said in an interview. "That's a really scary number for people that are supposed to be staying home and just be out there for essential travel and stuff."

Arrests drop after bars and taverns shutter

Some local sheriff's departments recorded bigger drops. In Central Oregon, the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office made 41 DUI arrests during March through May of this year, compared to 92 during the same period last year. Sheriff's Office spokesman Sgt. William Bailey attributed the 55% decrease to business closures due to COVID-19 and people staying home.

COVID-19 restrictions affecting restaurants, bars and taverns and stay-at-home orders took effect in mid- to late March across Oregon and Washington. Hospitality businesses began reopening in late May as Pacific Northwest counties gradually relaxed their shutdowns.



Fewer low level traffic stops due to COVID-19 exposure concerns

Chelan County Sheriff Brian Burnett said the quartet of law enforcement agencies dispatched by RiverCom 911 in Wenatchee, Washington, saw a 69% decrease in DUI arrests during March through May 2020 compared to the average of the same period over the prior three years.

"Even though the argument could be made that these numbers initially decreased the first 2-4 weeks due to less traffic vol-



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JPR News Focus

Continued from page 33

ume, I would argue that the greatest contributing factor is that agencies went to a reduced if not almost, no proactivity model in regards to traffic enforcement in order to minimize direct exposure with staff to the population at large," Sheriff Burnett wrote in an email accompanying the data report.

Burnett explained in a follow up email that commanders instructed patrol deputies to protect themselves from coronavirus exposure by lessening contact with "lower level" violators, which is sometimes how drunk driving is detected once an officer questions a pulled-over driver. RiverCom dispatches calls for Chelan County deputies, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office and the Wenatchee and East Wenatchee police departments.

Combined data from 32 highway locations monitored by the Washington State Department of Transportation showed traffic volumes bottomed out at the end of March, when highway traffic was 63% below the baseline. By the end of May, weekday traffic volumes recovered to within 19% of the baseline.

Alcohol and marijuana sales increased

The state director in Oregon for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Cate Duke, said all indications are that alcohol and drug use rose during the pandemic. Retail sales data show alcohol and marijuana flew off the shelves during the first months of the pandemic. So, less imbibing by the population was not a plausible explanation for the drop in DUI citations.

Even given the recent decrease in DUIs, Duke said impaired driving is "still a huge problem." She mentioned being particularly saddened by a recent fatal head-on crash caused by a 21-year-old Junction City man, who remains behind bars facing charges of driving under the influence, assault and two counts of negligent homicide. The crash on Memorial Day weekend near Brownsville, Oregon, killed two teenage siblings and seriously injured a third. They were traveling home from a visit to a veterinarian when their Honda Pilot was struck by the heavily intoxicated driver of a Ford F-250 pickup.



Tom Banse is a regional correspondent for the Northwest News Network, covering business, environment, public policy, human interest and national news across the Northwest. The Northwest News Network is a collaboration of public radio stations, including JPR, that broadcast in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

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What do civil rights protesters and anti-capitalism activists have in common with those who voted for Donald Trump?

No More Incremental Change

After Secret Service agents forcibly displaced peaceful protesters from Lafayette Square so that President Trump could stroll from the White House to have his photo taken in front of St. John's Episcopal Church, the church's members voiced outrage. Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, the Episcopal bishop of Washington, called the president's actions "antithetical to the teachings of Jesus."

Episcopalians are big on hierarchy, so next came the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry. He is the Presiding Bishop of the U.S.-based Episcopal Church and its 1.7 million members. He exhorted a nationwide audience to seek higher ground on the issue at hand.

A year ago, the *Harvard Business Review* profiled Curry's leadership style, asking him how he brings all sides together when faced with a divisive issue. His answer: "If there's a point of commonality – however small it may be – affirm that first, and then build from there."

Let's try it.

What do civil rights protesters and anti-capitalism activists have in common with those who voted for Donald Trump? Each group in its own way has given up on incremental change. Each is determined to overthrow the status quo.

Ideal incrementalism asks so little from each that the burden – the actual change – is imperceptible. It's not hard to ask for trust when the cost appears to be nothing. Incrementalism cannot correct systemic flaws. Until the status quo is stripped of status, it will keep its quo. Things will stay mostly the same.

As *The Daily Show's* host Trevor Noah pointed out, the current outrage against racism did not begin when George Floyd was strangled by a police officer's knee. It began a few days earlier, when a white woman in Central Park refused to leash her dog.

A black man who was birdwatching asked her to follow the park rules. She then threatened to call 911 and claim that a black man was intimidating her. She was placing a metaphorical knee on that man's neck. She was confident the system would side with her.

When we saw Officer Derek Chauvin, with one hand in his pocket, ignore entreaties from George Floyd, it was more of the

same. We could see the pattern. Both the dog walker and the police officer knew the system wouldn't change on its own.

Donald Trump promised big changes to society if he got elected. He has delivered on that promise. That makes his followers happy, because disruption is what they wanted. It's always satisfying to get what you were expecting. They barely notice that most of those drastic changes help the very wealthy and hurt the very poor.

The riots we've witnessed this week show a combustible mix of two rages. Don't try to separate racial and economic injustices. Recognize how our systems perpetuate both. America's last great leader did.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was widening his crusade to include all poor people. And then he was assassinated. We haven't moved from where he left us. Status quo is still so.

Only large changes will meet the mood of this moment. Incremental change is no longer on the overturned table.



Don Kahle (fridays@dksez.com) writes a column each Friday for *The Register-Guard* and blogs at www.dksez.com.





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Suite: April 2020 recalls a specific span of the pandemical timeline — a month noted for the heavy toll it took on New York, and among the broader jazz community.

Brad Mehldau And His Piano Outline The Resolve (And Yes, The Anxiety) Of Our Moment

Every working musician has a story to tell about the upending jolt of this spring, when the pandemic officially took hold. For pianist Brad Mehldau, that story begins with the interruption of his trio's European tour, and the cancelation of a planned trip back to New York.

Mehldau and his family usually split their time between New York City and Amsterdam. (His wife, vocalist and lyricist Fleurine, is Dutch.) They have spent the last few months sheltering at home along the Amstel River, and, like most of us, establishing new rhythms in the day.

At some point Mehldau — encouraged by his friend Bob Hurwitz, chairman emeritus of Nonesuch Records — also began composing music for a new solo-piano suite, designed to reflect the deep insecurities, comforting rituals and unexpected graces of the time.

Titled *Suite: April 2020*, it's available today in digital formats, and also in a deluxe pressing of 1,000 signed vinyl copies; each LP in that limited run will be sold for \$100, with the proceeds going to the Jazz Foundation of America's COVID-19 Musicians' Emergency Fund. (The album will be released on standard vinyl and CD on Sept. 18.)

As the title implies, *Suite: April 2020* recalls a specific span of the pandemical timeline — a month noted for the heavy toll it took on New York, and among the broader jazz community. Mehldau tracked the situation from afar with a mix of sadness and helpless frustration; some of the musicians lost to COVID-19, like alto saxophonist Lee Konitz, were a direct part of his musical development.

But Mehldau, who once released a solo album called *Elegiac Cycle*, didn't set out to create an elegy here. *Suite: April 2020* is, instead, a small arc of evocative snapshots that range in color and tone. "You could think of it as 'a day in the life,' if you wanted to," he tells NPR Music, speaking by videoconference. "There's a waking-up song, a very quick sort of chorale." Other pieces bear titles like "Stepping Outside," "In the Kitchen" and, as a closing theme, "Lullaby."

The emotional centerpiece of the suite, Mehldau says, consists of the two pieces that came first, almost fully formed. The first is "Stopping, Listening: Hearing," a portrait of the focus-shifting sensation he had when he stepped out of his front door to encounter a world at rest.



COURTESY BRAD MEHLDAU

The second piece is "Remembering Before All This," whose title neatly echoes the mood of the song. Mehldau performs it in this video, after briefly discussing the new suite and his support of the Jazz Foundation of America.

If the first part of the composition calls to mind the minimalist signature of Philip Glass, Mehldau doesn't resist the comparison. "Yeah, this could be something in the realm of Philip Glass," he allows, "because he's somebody who's unafraid to just work with triads and repetitive things and build something up that way. So the thought did cross my mind."

As for the emotional intention of "Remembering Before All This," Mehldau describes a pained nostalgia that many of his peers have also expressed. "I was thinking back to this

beautiful tour I was having with Larry Grenadier and Jeff Ballard," he says. "And this great life I have, where I get to go and play for people, and they come to listen to us in a room... And it's not so much that I've taken it for granted in the last few years. Really, more and more, I've seen how wonderful it is and how blessed I am. But this was just the gut pain of having that taken away, and not knowing when it's going to return."

Perhaps in answer to that uncertainty, Mehldau closes his new album with three popular songs from different eras. First comes Neil Young's "Don't Let It Bring You Down," followed by Billy Joel's "New York State of Mind" — each is given a spare, sensitive reading, practically unadorned.

The final tune is Jerome Kern's "Look For the Silver Lining," which might suggest blithe reassurance. "But I didn't resolve the chord, you know, because I think that while we do have to look for the silver lining, I don't think it's in our sights," Mehldau says. "So I ended the record on a V chord, which is what it is." You don't need to be fluent in music theory to understand this gesture: it's the sound of unfinished business, and perhaps a longing for home.



Nate Chinen has been writing about jazz for more than 20 years. He spent a dozen of them working as a critic for *The New York Times*, and helmed a long-running column for *JazzTimes*. As Director of Editorial Content at WBGO, in Newark, N.J., Chinen works with the multiplatform program *Jazz Night in America* and contributes a range of coverage to NPR Music.

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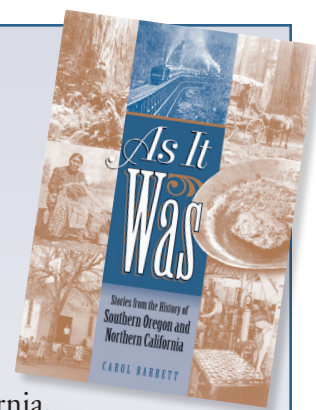
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ERIN ROSS

What Science Has Taught Us About COVID-19

(Note: This article was first published on June 15, 2020)

CCOVID-19 remains a threat. That hasn't changed since March, when Oregon started social distancing and things locked down. But the way we understand the coronavirus is evolving.

It's been over three months since Oregon's social-distancing and stay-home orders came down in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. Especially with the recent caseload spike and Gov. Kate Brown's order to pause reopening, sometimes it feels like nothing will be like it was before.

People have been wishing family members a happy birthday through a window, eating out on mostly-empty restaurant patios, or going to protests in masks.

The science around COVID-19 is changing so fast that even the valid-but-evolving research findings seem to blend in with the misinformation coming in from all sides. So we wanted to answer some of your questions, update you on the latest science, and answer everyone's top question: when can I get a hug again?

Reopening is inherently dangerous. The more people mix at work, church or socially, the more transmission there will be, and there's no way around it. That's why Oregon's reopening plan relies on testing and contact tracing, say state health officials. And it's Brown's reason for hitting pause on any further decisions to reopen.

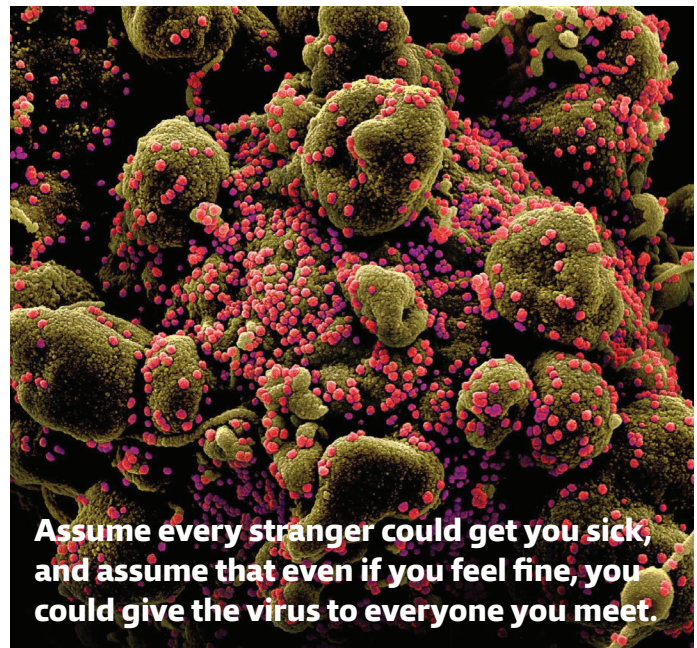
Assume every stranger could get you sick, and assume that even if you feel fine, you could give the virus to everyone you meet.

Is this going to last forever?

We have no idea, but the pandemic is going to last for a long time. And it's going to be uncertain for a long time. In one of the most widely read and cited articles of the pandemic, Tomas Pueyo described reopening as the "hammer and dance." First, we shut everything down to stop the initial spread. That's the "hammer." And now we're in the "dance."

Health officials and counties and the state will watch case numbers, and they'll roll back some aspects of reopening if cases increase. And then once they decrease, reopen again.

Unless other plans are raised, that dance will continue until we get a vaccine, and the U.S. is paying five manufacturers to start producing the vaccines now, in the hopes that if one works, they can start deploying it immediately. The U.S. plans to have 300 million vaccine doses stockpiled by Jan. 1, 2021, so



Assume every stranger could get you sick, and assume that even if you feel fine, you could give the virus to everyone you meet.

if everything goes well, it's possible we could start vaccinating next spring. But first, we need to prove the vaccines work.

What's the latest on whether you can get COVID-19 from surfaces?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently said they have found that this virus is primarily spread from person to person, and is unlikely to be spread on surfaces. They cited a handful of studies that suggest COVID-19 may not survive very long on most household surfaces.

But other studies have found the opposite, and some that have found the virus can survive for days. Scientists pushed back against the CDC's statement, and the next day the CDC updated their page again to clarify that guidance hadn't changed: person-to-person contact is the primary driver, but you should still assume you can catch COVID-19 from surfaces.

Wash your hands, clean doorknobs, countertops and other frequently-touched areas regularly. If taking extra measures like wearing gloves and sanitizing packages makes you feel safe, you shouldn't feel bad about doing that.

What are scientists saying now about the asymptomatic spread of COVID-19?

Official opinions on the asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 have flip-flopped so many times it could make your head spin. It was a rumor, then the gospel, then a conspiracy theory, and gospel again – until the World Health Organization put out a press release in early June saying asymptomatic spread was “very rare.”

Again, scientists pushed back, citing valid studies. Even Fauci said they were wrong. The WHO went into damage-control mode. Its updated statement says that asymptomatic spread can occur, but it's still unclear how much it drives infections.

Should we still think of COVID-19 as mostly a risk for people who are older or have underlying conditions?

Since the early days of the pandemic, we've learned that everyone is at some risk, and even young, active, healthy people can get seriously ill or even die from the disease. The main symptoms are still the same: a dry cough, difficulty breathing, and fever.

But now, we know it might cause a number of other conditions. It's causing blood clots in young, healthy people. Scientists think it's responsible for a rise in “multisystem inflammatory syndrome,” a rare disease that occurs in children after a viral illness. Doctors are studying “covid toes.”

Other people – people who weren't even sick enough to get hospitalized – say they're still feeling the impacts of COVID-19 months later. One thing hasn't changed: this virus is nasty and you do not want to get it.

Should I wear a mask?

At first, the CDC said masks weren't necessary: there was a global shortage, and asymptomatic spread wasn't confirmed. They thought staying home when you were sick would be enough. Now, they say you should wear a mask when you're out, even if you feel fine.

Wearing a mask offers some protection from viruses. But more importantly, it protects others from any viruses you might not know you're carrying. Wearing one also protects you in a roundabout way: humans are sheep (sorry, fellow humans!) so we do what everyone else does. Get enough people to wear masks, and folks will succumb to peer pressure, returning the favor you've done them by putting on masks to protect you and everyone else who's out and about.

And remember: If you venture out beyond the security of self-quarantine and you aren't washing your hands, or if you're touching your face, your mask doesn't do anyone any good.

Why is all of this changing so fast?

We like to think of science as a definitive, once-and-for-all monolith, but in real-time, science can be vague and is subject to change. Right now, science is happening at a record-breaking speed, and researchers are studying something they've never seen before. The rise-and-fall of hydroxychloroquine as a miracle cure is one example.

Changing your hypothesis in the face of new information is an integral part of science, but it's not something we're accus-



tomed to doing when we conduct our daily lives. In science, figuring out you were wrong is just another type of learning. It doesn't mean the research wasn't good, or the scientists messed up: we just learned a lot more about how COVID-19 works.

As new studies are done and new information comes in, recommendations will change. A lot. And often. Staying on top of them can be hard, but the basics will always be the same: just try to be safe.

Summer is almost here. What's the latest on how I can hike/bike/camp/etc. responsibly?

Meeting up with friends outside is a lot safer than meeting up inside, but that doesn't mean you should stop social distancing. If you're planning a vacation or a hike, try to plan one closer to home: if there's an outbreak in your area, you don't want to bring it to a new one or vice-versa. Remember that while some counties might be “open,” towns might have older residents, or might not have enough hospital beds to handle a big outbreak.

If you're traveling, try to bring all of your supplies with you, so you don't need to stop in local grocery stores and potentially infect yourself or others. Be aware of any outbreaks in the area around you, and if there's one in your community, don't travel.

If you're outside, you're expected to keep a six-foot distance from other people, wear a mask, or both. If you're camping, keep in mind that restrooms are gross even when there isn't a pandemic, so wash your hands before and after, and consider wearing a mask. Check to see if trailhead restrooms are closed before you leave, and bring anything you need to do your business with you.

And remember: pack it in, pack it out. Don't leave toilet paper lying around in the woods.

How often can I go out of my house?

Your personal-safety threshold will probably be different from other people's. So it's important to remember that every time you go somewhere you are at risk of exposure, and the goal should be to limit that exposure as much as possible. This is a great guide to help you weigh risks.

The more places you go, the greater the risk, for both yourself and the people you meet. It grows exponentially: Think about the web of people you interact with every day and who they interact with. You should still try to limit your trips to grocery stores and to continue buying food for multiple weeks at a time. And remember that after you leave your house, you could come back infected. So the longer you wait before you go out again, the smaller your chance of being an asymptomatic COVID-19 spreader is.

Can I see my friends and family?

Social isolation is a public health issue, and public health officials agree on this. Everyone needs to make their own risk assessment. Think again about that web of people – sure, your friends are social distancing. But are their friends? Their parents?

Have frank conversations about how cautious your friends are being, and be prepared to turn them down if you have different levels of concern. But absolutely do see family and friends. Community is more important than ever.

Try to throw small events, and follow the size limits allowed under your county's restrictions. Some people are creating small "quarantine-pods," little groups of people who agree to just hang out with others in that group. That's one option.

You can also plan socially-distant outdoor events or put chairs six feet apart. Get creative. Find new, safe ways to get that human fix without putting others at risk. And then, please, share them with OPB. We want to see all the innovative ways Oregonians are staying sane while staying safe. Here's my email.

Is it safe for my kids to play with other kids?

This is a huge one – social development is really important for kids. The jury is still out on how much of a role children play in transmitting COVID-19. Some studies make it seem like they aren't very big transmitters, but it's important to remem-

ber that schools have been closed for most of the duration of this outbreak in America.

Try to be smart about who your kids hang out with. It's OK to ask parents if they're social distancing, what sorts of precautions they're taking and when was the last time they had prolonged contact with strangers. And it's OK to say "I'm not comfortable with this right now."

Just like with adults, it's better to be with friends whose history you know than to expose your children strangers whose history you don't – so crowded playgrounds are probably places to avoid.

Can I have a hug?

Yes, yes you can.

Pick and choose who you can hug, though, and if there's any risk you're sick? Better hold off. I quarantined for two weeks so I could hug my parents. Was it overkill? Yes. Was it worth it to give them huge hugs knowing they would be safe? Absolutely, 100% yes.

If you or a person you would like to hug may have been exposed or broke social-distancing guidelines, here's a maybe-silly suggestion: At the start of the outbreak, one of my friends sent me a giant stuffed seal. It's round and adorable and looks like this bouncy boi, and it is very satisfying to squeeze. Before we sign off on socially-distant video calls, we hug our stuffed animals instead of each other. It's not the same, but I swear it makes me feel better.

Erin Ross is a writer and researcher for Oregon Public Broadcasting, specializing in science and environmental coverage. Her work also appears on "Oregon Field Guide."

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MILK STREET

CHRISTOPHER
KIMBALL

Mexican Beef And Tomatillo Stew (Entomatado De Res)

This classic Mexican dish, based on a recipe in *Tu Casa Mi Casa* by chef Enrique Olvera, uses tart and tangy tomatillos to balance the richness of beef chuck. Yukon Gold potatoes lend the broth light body while giving the stew more substance. This recipe is about as simple as can be—the bulk of the ingredients go into the pot without browning and cook in the oven for a couple hours, then the tomatillos and potatoes are added, and the stew finishes in the oven for another hour or so. Serve with warmed corn torillas on the side.

Don't prep the potatoes until you're ready to add them to the pot or the cut surfaces will discolor. If you must prep them in advance, keep them submerged in water, then drain them well before use.

3½ HOURS, 15 minutes active

4 SERVINGS

Ingredients

2½ Pounds boneless beef chuck roast, trimmed and cut into 2-inch chunks

1 Medium yellow onion, cut into 1-inch chunks

5 Medium garlic cloves, smashed and peeled

2 Jalapeño chilies, 1 stemmed, seeded and roughly chopped,
1 stemmed and sliced into thin rounds

3 Bay leaves

1 Teaspoon dried oregano

½ Teaspoon ground cumin

Kosher salt and ground black pepper

1 Pound yukon gold potatoes, cut into 1½-inch chunks

12 Ounces tomatillos, husked, cored and roughly chopped

Pumpkin seeds, toasted, to serve

Roughly chopped fresh cilantro, to serve

Directions

Heat the oven to 325°F with a rack in the lower-middle position. In a Dutch oven, toss together the beef, onion, garlic, the chopped jalapeño, bay, oregano, cumin, 1 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Cover, transfer to the oven and cook for 2 hours.

Remove the pot from the oven and stir in the potatoes and tomatillos. Cover, return to the oven and cook until the potatoes are tender and a knife inserted into a piece of beef meets no resistance, another 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

Remove and discard the bay, then taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve sprinkled with toasted pumpkin seeds, cilantro and sliced jalapeño.

Christopher Kimball's Milk Street in downtown Boston—at 177 Milk Street—is home to the editorial offices and cooking school. It also is where they record *Christopher Kimball's Milk Street* television and radio shows. *Milk Street* is changing how we cook by searching the world for bold, simple recipes and techniques. For more information, go to 177milkstreet.com. You can hear *Milk Street Radio* Sundays at 3:00pm on JPR's *News & Information* service.

History Where We Live

Current events have highlighted that we can all benefit from some self-reflection and education during these extraordinary times. Most archaeologists and historians recognize the need to decolonize our disciplines and promote more accurate interpretations of the past. In addition to making the field more accessible and inclusive (and attractive) for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) scholars, improvements need to be made to the way we communicate and prioritize history. To do this we need to re-evaluate not only the subjects we study, but also the format through which we present the past. It is not enough to showcase historical diversity, we have a responsibility to respect and meaningfully document the actions and impacts of non-white actors in the history of the places we live.

In the words of Brent Leggs, executive director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund (and guest on our May episode of “Underground History” heard on the *Jefferson Exchange*), “representation matters.” Researching, preserving, and promoting Black history helps to underscore the ways that African Americans shaped the United States. In a recent statement of solidarity for the Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality, Oregon Black Pioneers president Willie Richardson wrote that the work of Black Oregonians “has propelled our state to adopt and be accountable to civil rights laws, change injustice policies and practices, and move this state to be a home for all.”

In addition to checking out the many curated anti-racist reading lists circulating the internet (I recommend heading over to the “Talking About Race” portal hosted by the National Museum of African American History and Culture), I wanted to point out some of the great work happening in our region:

The **Oregon Black Pioneers** is a frequent guest on the *Jefferson Exchange*, and has been producing high quality educational content for years. Their recent exhibit, *Racing to Change: Oregon’s Civil Rights Years* ran at the Oregon Historical Society, is now at the University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History, and can be viewed online through their website. In addition, they have created educational content for grades 3-5 and 6-12. Publications such as *African Americans of Portland* by Kimberly Stowers Moreland (Arcadia Publishing, 2013) and *Perseverance: A History of African Americans in Oregon’s Marion and Polk Counties* by Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers, Sheridan McCarthy, and Stanton Nelson (Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers, 2011) can also be purchased on the site: oregonblackpioneers.org



Vanport, Oregon, destroyed by flood in June 1948.

Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) producer Kami Horton recently directed an Oregon Experience documentary entitled *Oregon’s Black Pioneers*. This Emmy winning program can be streamed for free on OPB’s website (Oregon Experience Season 13, episode #1301).

The **Oregon Historical Quarterly** volume on White Supremacy and Resistance (Winter issue 2019) is a special issue investigating Oregon’s relationship to relevant topics such as Whiteness, settler colonialism, racial exclusion and land ownership, abolitionism and anti-slavery politics, violence, labor and organizing, White supremacist organization, and forms of resistance to White supremacy. The volume can be purchased through the Oregon Historical Society. Guest editor Carmen P. Thompson’s powerful introduction to the volume entitled “Expectation and Exclusion: An Introduction to Whiteness, White Supremacy, and Resistance in Oregon” can be accessed on the website in full: <https://www.ohs.org/research-and-library/oregon-historical-quarterly/>

Maxwell Heritage Interpretive Center in Joseph, Oregon was established in 2008 to commemorate Oregon’s multicultural logging history. The timber town of Maxville was home to both African American and White loggers in its heyday between 1924-1933. The organization has been collecting oral histories and photos from the original families and provides a variety of educational and creative programming inspired by the history of the site. These resources, in addition to videos and other information, can be explored on the website: <https://maxville.squarespace.com/>

Underground History

Continued from page 43

The town of Vanport, Oregon was destroyed when the Columbia River flooded in 1948, displacing thousands of Black and immigrant families (Check out our “Underground History” conversation with Laura Lo Forti and James Harrison archived on the JPR website to hear more). The story of Vanport and its residents is being captured and shared through the **Vanport Mosaic**: a “memory-activism platform.” The organization hosts an annual festival in the spring and has a variety of fascinating resources curated on their website. This includes oral history videos and links to walking tours that cover the history of Vanport, the Black Panther Party in NE Portland, and Portland’s history of community displacement. You can also follow links to view historical photographs housed at the Oregon Historical Society. The May 2020 festival schedule included a captivating blend of history/art/politics, and as the program was moved online due to the Pandemic many events can still be viewed on their website: <https://www.vanportmosaic.org/>

Voices of the Golden Ghosts tells the stories of African American gold miners in northern California’s Siskiyou and Shasta Counties “through the lens of contemporary storytelling, theater, photography, music and video” (check the “Under-

ground History” archives to hear our April conversation with Mark Oliver and Patrick Brunmeier). The group has curated an exhibit at Turtle Bay Museum in Redding and does public events across northern California. Additional information and videos can be found here: <https://markoliver.org/golden-ghosts>

Finally, I encourage you to spend some time exploring the vast resource on all things interesting in Oregon by visiting the **Oregon Encyclopedia**. You won’t regret it! This living resource (more is being added all of the time) provides well-written, peer reviewed entries on topics such as “Black Cowboys in Oregon,” a profile of African American activist “Lizzie Weeks,” “Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church,” “Black Exclusion Laws in Oregon,” and much, much more: <https://oregonencyclopedia.org/>



Chelsea Rose is an archaeologist with the Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) and co-host of Underground History, a monthly segment that airs during the Jefferson Exchange on JPR’s News & Information service.

The Folk Show

For two decades, The Folk Show has featured an eclectic blend of all things folk and some things not-so-folk. Singer/songwriters, Americana, bluegrass, Celtic, traditional, old-time, and some surprises are featured each week.

Hosted by Robin Terranova.

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AS IT WAS

As It Was is a co-production of Jefferson Public Radio and the Southern Oregon Historical Society. The series' script editor and coordinator is Kernan Turner, whose maternal grandmother arrived in Ashland in 1861 via the Applegate Trail.

As It Was airs Monday through Friday on JPR's Classics & News service at 9:30am and 1:00pm, and on the News & Information service at 9:57am and 9:57pm following the *Jefferson Exchange*.

Callahan, Calif., School Closes Doors In 1974

BY GAIL FIORINI-JENNER

In June 1974, the little Callahan School closed its doors forever, spelling an end to the 100-year-old school district in Callahan, Calif. Constructed in 1911, it was actually the third schoolhouse built in the mining town.

The first school opened in 1874 with 36 students and Miss Rose Barnum as the teacher. At that time, the community was booming with more than 1,000 miners living in the gulches outside of town. By 1880, there were 85 pupils enrolled. Interestingly, this remote town was one of the first to have electric lights in Northern California.

The second school was so poorly built that the wind blew through in winter, making it very hard on the students. The schoolhouse was also used as a hospital during a smallpox

outbreak in 1900, and the building became known as the "pest house." Unhappy parents did not want to send their students to the school and a team of horses pulled the old building down.

The remaining one-room Callahan School was the center of the town's social life and served as a Sabbath school and meeting house for organizations such as the "Knights of Templar." The school closed in 1974 when the population had dwindled to two students.

SOURCES: "Callahan School District." School History: Callahan School. Siskiyou County Office of Education, Web. 15 May 2015. <<http://sissscoe.sisnet.ssku.k12.ca.us/~imcftp/SchoolHistory/callahanpics.html>>.

Edson Brothers Expand The Klamath Hot Springs

BY GAIL FIORINI-JENNER

Brothers Joe and Lile Edson saw an opportunity to expand the business when they purchased the old Beswick Hotel in 1887.

They built an elaborate lodge of lava rock and added to the resort's exotic appearance by planting shade trees and lush lawns. They piled lava-rock for fencing and placed cement pillars at the entrances.

The lodge had 75 guest rooms, a large dining room and a kitchen, an ice house and other rooms, including a separate dining area for the hired help. To provide food for the guests, the Edsons grew a large garden tended to by a Chinese gardener. The Edsons also raised cattle and fine horses.

The hot springs were located on the east bank of the Klamath River, 40 miles south of Klamath Falls and 40 miles northeast of Yreka. A bathhouse over the springs had six mud baths, a steam bath, and a barbershop. Hot-springs water filled a large swimming pool.

A masseur and attendants served summertime patrons, including President Herbert Hoover, novelist Zane Grey, pilot Amelia Earhart, and many movie celebrities. The hotel burned in 1915 and the property sold in 1921.

SOURCE: Hessig, Alice. "The History of Klamath Hot Springs." Siskiyou Pioneer, The 3.8 (1965): 63-69. Print.



POETRY

JOSHUA WICKS
JOHN J. BRUGALETTA

I Cannot Promise to Smile

I cannot promise to smile
When I visit these places,
Having lost you
Just a griever's smile,
Behind the tongue
Elusive and wary
Like the black-eyed doe
Below the thirsty maples
That in the fall will fan out
Their yellow blanket
Beneath her surviving child
As it loses its spots,
As it loses its place.

—Joshua Wicks

Joshua Wicks lives and works in Grants Pass, Oregon. His poetry has previously been featured in the *Rogue's Gallery* magazine and in the *Jefferson Monthly*.

Cabin on the Lake

This cabin we have rented by the lake
comes with one gray canoe and one green snake.
I greet the last at noon, the first at dawn;
one slides along the waves and one the lawn.
Now from this wooden chair, this peeling porch,
his little lifted head is like a torch
to dimly light my final, fatal crossing.

The wind is up; my gray canoe is tossing.
From somewhere out of sight a water bird
emits a panting call that can be heard
across the lake, I'm sure, where neighbors stay
and light their lights for answer. Then a bray,
a female human cry like pain or rut
corrects my vision from the soul to gut.
They're just along the shore, that newer place,
the angry fellow and the pretty face—
tonight it may be someone new is formed
and some new comer of the cosmos warmed.

Come, Master Virgil, come and read me now
your tender eclogue prophesying how
he shall be born. But change the tune, for this,
you know, is not the first but monstrous bliss.

—John J. Brugaletta

John J. Brugaletta is professor emeritus of English and comparative literature at California State University, Fullerton, where he edited *South Coast Poetry Journal* for ten years. He has published over 380 poems in 85 venues and has seven collections of his poetry in print, including *Selected Poems* (Future Cycle Press, 2019). X. J. Kennedy has called his selected poems "a vital contribution to American poetry." One of his poems has been featured on Garrison Keillor's radio program *The Writer's Almanac*. He now lives near Eureka, California.

Writers may submit original poetry for publication in *Jefferson Journal*.

Email 3–6 poems, a brief bio, and your mailing address in one attachment to jeffmopoetry@gmail.com, or send 3–6 poems, a brief bio, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

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